

**Interagency Wildfire Management Team
Meeting Notes
January 12, 2005**

Doug Tucker (Los Alamos County Fire Department) announced that the Wildland Fire 2005 conference will be held in Albuquerque during February 16-18. Doug will be a presenter during the session on the Los Alamos Defensible Space Project. Doug also discussed the proposed burning of slash piles in Pueblo Canyon, which is scheduled for later in the winter.

Gary Kemp (Bandelier National Monument) will moderate a meeting to discuss progress toward development of the Interagency Fire Management Plan for the Jemez Mountains Fire Planning Unit. This meeting will follow the IWMT meeting and the next meeting will be held on February 9, also immediately following the IWMT meeting. Participants should submit the latest version of their agency fire plans to Marla Rodgers.

Gary also announced that work is continuing toward completion of the biological assessment for the Bandelier National Monument Fire Management Plan. Finally, Bandelier and LANL are discussing a long-term lease agreement for their mutual use of the fire center at TA-49.

Shannon Smith (Environmental Characterization and Remediation, LANL) announced the following proposed wildfire hazard mitigation activities for the current fiscal year. These include 1) the fuel break adjacent to Pajarito Acres, 2) hazard tree removal along the Pajarito corridor, 3) thinning at TA-54, and 4) additional thinning at TA-39 and TA-49. These thinning activities will be coordinated with all applicable LANL compliance groups.

Bill Armstrong (Santa Fe National Forest) updated the IWMT on the thinning activities in Pueblo Canyon and in the western perimeter of Los Alamos. Thinning along Highway 4 above the Back Gate will also start this week, and thinning in Rendija Canyon will begin in the spring. Bill also announced that Sandy Hurlocker will manage the Forest Service Office at Los Alamos.

Cassandra Begay (National Nuclear Security Administration, Los Alamos Site Office) reported that the Environmental Management System procedures have been approved.

Phil Taylor (Emergency Management, Los Alamos County) is enhancing the Los Alamos public warning system as part of the overall objectives for the current fiscal year.

Sam Loftin (Ecology Group, LANL) announced that the East Jemez Resource Council meeting will be held tomorrow morning the Ecology Group Conference Room.

Randy Balice (Ecology Group, LANL) recently completed a report, coauthored by Kathy Bennett and Marjorie Wright, and entitled "Burn severities, fire intensities and impacts to major vegetation types from the Cerro Grande Fire" (LA-14159). This report documents some of impacts of the Cerro Grande Fire on the ecosystems of the Los Alamos region. Fifty-seven percent of the Cerro Grande Fire burned at low severity, and many of these areas have recovered quickly. Typical of this condition were ponderosa pine forests on LANL property, which were burned at low severity. However, 34.7 percent of the fire burned at high severity. This included

large tracts of land that were formerly occupied by mixed conifer and ponderosa pine forests. Within the portion of the Cerro Grande Fire that burned intensely on May 10, 2000, extensive, continuous areas of forests were burned at high burn severity and high fire intensity. This region is on the order of 15 square miles in size. Assuming that these severely burned areas will re-establish through natural regeneration processes of trees, it may require centuries for forest vegetation to reappear on the landscape.

The next IWMT meeting will be at 9:30 AM on Wednesday, January 26, at TA-21, Building 210 in the ENV-ECO (Ecology Group) Conference Room (142). The IWMT meets every other week and these meetings are open to the public. Contact Randy Balice (balice@lanl.gov, 665-1270) for further information, or to get on the distribution list for these meeting notes.